

Senator OLYMPIA SNOWE and myself to finance prescription drug coverage for seniors under Medicare with a tobacco tax. Senator SNOWE and I have now developed a specific proposal that calls for a 55-cent-a-pack tobacco tax that would be used to cover the prescription drug needs of older people under Medicare. We think that is appropriate because, of course, the Medicare program spends upwards of \$10 billion a year simply paying for tobacco-related illnesses that older people have suffered.

Under the Snowe-Wyden proposal, we would be able to raise \$70 billion in order to cover prescription drug benefits for older people over the next 10 years. That is hard dollars to cover this important benefit. It is not phantom funding. It is not sleight of hand. It is not a kind of wish-and-hope, pie-in-the-sky way to take care of this particular need for older people. It is a concrete, tangible concept.

A majority of the Senate, Senators of both political parties, have voted for it. I am very hopeful that it will be possible now for the Senate to build on this support, with bipartisan approval, to actually get the job done and support older people.

In the legislation that Senator SNOWE and I have put together, we envision this \$70 billion being used to assist older people with the insurance premiums that they now pay for Medicare supplemental policies. As we know, many of our seniors have Medicare supplemental policies. Many of our seniors participate in what is called Medicare Choice, a program that involves Medicare HMOs. It may well be that a number of seniors wish to purchase policies that cover only prescription drugs.

But what Senator SNOWE and I have developed would be voluntary. No senior would be required to do it. The Presiding Officer and I will recall the catastrophic care fiasco of several years ago when older people were concerned about being required to pay for something they did not really need or did not particularly want.

That would not be the case under the legislation developed by Senator SNOWE and I. It would be voluntary if an older person chose to participate in the program; and \$70 billion in real funding would be eligible to assist the older people who desire to have that coverage as part of their Medicare.

Senator SNOWE and I believe the best way to deliver this coverage is to build on a model that Members of Congress know a fair amount about, and that is the Federal employee health plan.

Senator SNOWE and I recognize that program covers different people than we would be covering under Medicare, so our delivery system for this particular benefit would be a kind of senior citizen's version of the Federal employee health plan. We call it the SPICE Board. It stands for Senior Prescription Insurance Coverage Equity. We consider it a kind of senior citizens' friendly version of the Federal employee health plan.

We have incorporated some of the very good ideas that have come from Families USA, the seniors' advocacy group, the National Council of Senior Citizens, and a variety of the senior citizens' organizations, to ensure that the SPICE Board that would deliver this system would offer choices and competition for older people but at the same time would not allow cherry-picking; so that a plan could not take just healthy people, it would make sure there were protections against adverse selection.

We bar the use of preexisting conditions. A lot of the problems we have seen with insurance coverage in the past would not be allowed under the SPICE Board because we have incorporated many of the good ideas that have come from AARP and Families USA and the National Council of Senior Citizens so as to ensure that the SPICE Board would offer these benefits to older people in a senior-friendly way.

At the same time, it is important to note that this is a competitive model. This will help us to hold costs down because older people would have the kind of bargaining power, through the SPICE Board, that an HMO has today when it bargains for younger people getting prescription drug coverage under the Federal employee health plan.

I think it is particularly sad to see older people, many of whom have 16, 18, 20 prescriptions they are using in a year, paying well over \$1,000 out of pocket for their medicine. It is particularly outrageous that they end up paying a premium, since they don't have coverage, when they walk into a pharmacy and pay out of pocket. They have to pay more because, in effect, they are subsidizing those who have bargaining power in the private sector who get their coverage through a managed care plan.

We use an approach that uses markets, offers choice, avoids price controls, but makes sure that through the SPICE Board, older people would have the kind of bargaining power and clout we see HMOs having in the private sector.

I am very hopeful that this week, as the Congress moves to have a vigorous discussion about Medicare—the President's proposal is coming tomorrow; our colleagues on both sides of the Hill expressing great interest in this issue—Members will reflect on the fact that a majority of the Senate has already voted for the Snowe-Wyden proposal to finance this coverage with a tobacco tax. It is only fair, because of the costs Medicare incurs related to tobacco. We know now that a bipartisan group of Senators is willing to at least look at that approach to finance this coverage.

I am also very hopeful that our colleagues will steer clear of some of these price control ideas that would create more bureaucracy. Incidentally, most of these price controls just shift the cost onto the backs of other con-

sumers. I am very fearful that if we set up a price control regime for older people under Medicare, a lot of low-income folks, African Americans, Hispanics, and others would end up seeing the costs shifted onto them because they wouldn't have any protection from this price control regime.

In addition to the real intangible way that is going to be essential to finance this program, we ought to use a concept the Congress is familiar with for delivering the benefit. Under the Senior Prescription Insurance Coverage Equity Program, the SPICE Program, we would be able to do that. We would be able to deliver the benefit in a way that allows senior citizens to exercise clout in the marketplace and be in a position to hold their costs down. There would be real consumer protections because we have incorporated the good ideas from Families USA and AARP and the National Council of Senior Citizens.

I am very hopeful as this debate goes forward this week, our colleagues in the Senate will see there is a chance to avoid some of the bickering and partisanship that has accompanied other issues, look to giving older people this important preventive benefit that is so critical but financing it in a real way, not with phantom kind of money, and then delivering the benefit in a way that steers clear of price controls but gives older citizens in our country the kind of bargaining power an HMO has so the older people can get reasonable prices for their coverage.

I know the Presiding Officer has a great interest in this issue. He and I have worked often on this matter. He can count on the fact that Senator SNOWE and I will be visiting with him, as well as other colleagues, because it is our intent to do everything possible to keep the Senate, at least on the prescription drug issue, focused on the real needs of older people and the opportunity to address this issue in this session of Congress with real and hard financing and a delivery system that will work for the 21st century.

I yield the floor.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL JAMES L. JONES, JR.

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, it is a distinct honor and personal privilege for me to pay tribute to two distinguished Americans. One of them is General James L. Jones, Jr., the newly confirmed 32nd Commandant of the United States Marine Corps.

The general hails from Kansas City, Missouri. He spent his formative years in France where he acquired his fluency in the French language.

He is a graduate of Georgetown University School of Foreign Service and I understand he still keeps up a Georgetown tradition by playing a little basketball now and then.

General Jones is a warrior—part of a family of distinguished marines. His father commanded a Marine Corps Force

reconnaissance company during the Second World War. His uncle, Lieutenant General William Jones, commanded Marine Forces in the Pacific and had a long and distinguished combat record.

On a personal note, General Jones and I served together in Vietnam during the siege of Khe Sahn. The general was twice decorated for bravery, receiving the Silver Star Medal—our Nation's third highest award for valor—as well as the Bronze Star Medal with combat "V."

For me, the general is truly "a brother of the bond"—a member of the small "band of brothers" who have served their country with courage and honor in the crucible of combat.

General Jones is a highly experienced infantry commander and staff officer—during his long and distinguished career he has served as an infantry battalion commander, Marine Expeditionary Unit commander and as the commanding general of the Second Marine Division at Camp Lejeune, North Carolina.

He has led marines from the fire-swept rice paddies of Vietnam to the mountains of Northern Iraq and Turkey.

General Jones just recently completed an assignment as the Military Assistant to the Secretary of Defense, our former colleague Bill Cohen. In this capacity, he accompanied the Secretary around the globe in support of the defense of our Nation's vital national interests.

Many may not know this, but General Jones is also a "veteran" of the United States Senate. He served as the Marine Corps Liaison Officer to the Senate alongside another colleague—then Captain, United States Navy, JOHN MCCAIN.

Mr. President, I, again, welcome Lieutenant General Jones as the 32nd Commandant and as the newest member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff. He will lead one of the finest military organizations on Earth, the United States Marine Corps. He will be responsible for our Nation's premier "911" force, charged with guiding and directing our Corps of Marines into the new century and millennium.

I know I speak for my colleagues on both sides of the aisle in wishing General Jones, his lovely wife Diane—as well as his family Jim Jr., Kevin, Greg, and Jennifer—our very best wishes. On June 30, 1999, he will take on the awesome responsibility of being the 32nd Commandant of the Marine Corps. Semper Paratus and Godspeed, General Jones.

TRIBUTE TO GENERAL ERIC K. SHINSEKI

Mr. CLELAND. Mr. President, I rise today to recognize a distinguished soldier, General Eric K. Shinseki, whose inspiring personal journey is a story that could happen only in America.

My good friend and distinguished colleague, the senior senator from Hawaii,

presented a moving tribute to General Shinseki when he formally introduced his fellow Hawaiian to the Armed Services Committee on June 8th. Senator INOUE reminded us that when the general was born on the island of Kauai in the midst of the Second World War, his Japanese heritage made him, according to the regrettable laws that existed at that time, an enemy alien. Due in large part to the heroism of noble Hawaiians like our colleague, who fought so bravely and honorably and at such great personal sacrifice with the 442d Regimental Combat Team in Europe, Japanese-Americans no longer bear the indignity that the government of their country visited upon them during that time of war. As Senator INOUE reminded us, President Roosevelt declared that Americanism is a matter of mind and heart and that it is not, and never has been, a matter of racial color. The birthright that Senator INOUE's blood purchased for these Americans enabled young Ric Shinseki to rise to the top of the military profession in this great country. And for that we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to our brave and distinguished colleague.

General Shinseki began to show promise at a tender age. An outstanding student, he left the Territory of Hawaii for the first time and came east to become a high school exchange student in New Jersey.

Having broadened his horizons, he sought and secured an appointment to the United States Military Academy. While a cadet at West Point he heard a young president challenge the Nation to "ask not what your country can do for you. Ask what you can do for your country." He listened in the Cadet Mess as General of the Army Douglas MacArthur eloquently defined the words of the Academy motto, "Duty, Honor, Country." Cadet Shinseki has never stopped answering those ringing calls to duty. He answers them still.

He graduated from the Military Academy in 1965 with a commission in the field artillery. He soon found himself en route to Vietnam and a tour of duty with the 25th Infantry Division, the "Tropic Lightning" Division. Onboard a ship crossing the Pacific a veteran non-commissioned officer taught the young lieutenant his craft. For days and days the two men drilled on the techniques of calling for and observing artillery fire. Second Lieutenant Shinseki never forgot the value of skilled and dedicated non-commissioned officers. He has been a soldier's soldier ever since.

Combat wounds cut short his tenure in Vietnam. After a long convalescence, he volunteered to return to the war, to answer the summons of the trumpet once again. While commanding a cavalry troop with the 5th Infantry Division, he received another wound, this one far more serious. For a while, his life was in jeopardy. And even after the healing had begun, there were serious questions about whether he could continue his career.

True to his nature, honoring his birthright and still answering the call to duty, Ric Shinseki fought to stay in the Army. Fortunately for us, the Army saw more than a little potential in this twice-wounded warrior, and granted his request to stay. They sent him to Duke University to get a degree in English literature so that he could return to teach at his alma mater on the banks of the Hudson. There, as a member of the West Point faculty, he could teach and mentor a new generation of officers, inspiring them with his stoic example of duty and sacrifice.

Since that time, General Shinseki has built two great legacies in the Army. First, he is a leader and trainer of soldiers. He has been a commander and operations officer in armored and mechanized formations from the 3rd of the 7th Cavalry in Europe, to my own beloved First Team, the First Cavalry Division at Fort Hood, Texas, where he served as commanding general.

General Shinseki has also built a reputation as a brilliant staff officer who has helped the army to shape its force and modernize its training during tours of duty in five different positions in the Office of the Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations and Plans. There he came to know the army as an institution, to learn the folkways of the Pentagon, and to understand the byzantine nature of this great city.

In 1997 the President and the Senate recognized the enormous potential of this soldier by promoting him to a fourth star and appointing him Commanding General of United States Army, Europe. This critical assignment was all the more important because General Shinseki was also soon to become Commanding General of the Stabilization Force (SFOR) in Bosnia-Herzegovina. There he undertook the difficult and delicate mission of implementing the Dayton Peace Accords among the Bosnians, Croats, and Serbs, a task whose complexity has been underscored by our more recent trials in the Balkans.

Last year, General Shinseki returned home to become Vice Chief of Staff of the Army, to run the staff in the building he knows so well. He has brought a mature, steady hand to his administration of the Army Staff.

A combat veteran, a soldier's soldier, an accomplished trainer, a consummate staff officer, a respected commander, this son of Japanese immigrants who was born an enemy alien has now risen to the pinnacle of the American military profession. Wow, what a story. In a ceremony on June 22, 1999 at Fort Myer, Virginia, General Eric K. Shinseki assumed duty as the 34th Chief of Staff of the Army.

He is a visionary leader and there is no one better qualified to lead the United States Army into the next millennium. I salute his service, his sacrifice, his devotion to duty. I applaud his perseverance, his intelligence, his humility. I feel honored that the members of the Armed Services Committee